

Proposal for a USAID Operational Concepts Panel

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Background to this proposal

Twelve months ago, one of us (Barnett) penned a series of management essays concerning USAID's new OPS system.¹ This work was performed under a purchase order from Africa Bureau's Office of Sustainable Development. Being well received by the sponsor, the essays were subsequently posted on Africa Bureau's electronic *Results Framework Network*, or RFNET. As a result of this exposure, all nine essays were reprinted in the Agency's reengineering digest, *On Track*, over the course of last summer.²

In the fifth of Barnett's essays ("Are We There Yet? The Never-ending Story Known as Reengineering"; see Annex I for the complete text), he compared the implementation of USAID's new OPS system to the Department of Navy's own effort at institutional reengineering in 1991-1992. Barnett highlighted how navy leaders felt compelled to stand up an independent "Doctrine Command" to focus on the slow and steady gathering of best practices from the field as their post-Cold War naval vision was put into practice, and proposed USAID consider something similar:

USAID should establish an organization dedicated to the long-term collection and analysis of doctrine-generating experiences from the field. This body cannot be Washington-centered or staffed. Its center of gravity must lie with the missions. The generation of doctrine is inherently a bottom-up process. If the organization created smacks more of a Politburo than a House of Representatives, genuine doctrine will not be generated--only directives from on high. Another way to think of this proposed organization is that it must be significantly detached from USAID's executive branch, or the Management Bureau. If the Operations Business Area Analysis effort can be thought of as the "new USAID's" Constitutional Congress, this doctrine-judging body must be something closer to a Supreme Court, or something that picks its judgments from among the best arguments that wind their way up from the local courts (read missions) around the "land." If this body enjoys no separation of power from the Management Bureau, it will likely be limited to rule-making as opposed to experience-judging.

We were invited by the Africa Bureau to submit a proposal along the lines outlined in Barnett's original essay. It was further agreed that we would investigate--in addition to the Naval Doctrine Command--a select series of similar "concept development" organizations within the federal government for comparative purposes.³

By "concept development," we mean entities that—in a future-oriented fashion—identify and explore potential roadblocks or "show stoppers" for that agency's critical missions, with the expressed intent of targeting such downstream problems—in *advance*—for corrective action. This is not to be confused with typical day-to-day management concerns, nor with evaluation of current or past activities. Existing organizations with the purpose of policy planning and oversight typically view this function as inherently coming under their bailiwick. However, concept development organizations are purposely set up to bypass normal policymaking procedures, which are viewed by the concerned sponsors as intrinsically handicapped when it comes to out-of-the-box thinking, being

as they are products of past bureaucratic struggles.

This paper is the initial product of our research, which was conducted over the course of December 1997. We're ready to offer further documentation, if desired. We're also prepared to offer a formal briefing to interested parties. This work is performed under Global Bureau's Center for Environment IQC known as EPIQ (Environmental Policy and Institutional Strengthening IQC) for Africa Bureau's Natural Resources Management Unit. Bob Winterbottom of International Resources Group (IRG) serves as EPIQ's Senior Manager.

What we propose for USAID's ongoing efforts to strengthen the new OPS system

We're convinced USAID needs to set up a new institutional "center of gravity" to supercede the role currently played in part by PPC's Office of Results Oriented Reengineering, which we consider a largely reactive body lacking in bureaucratic muscle. We propose that this new organization, which we call the Operational Concepts Panel (OCP), be directly attached to the office of the Deputy Administrator, who would serve as Chairperson for the panel. The 20-member panel would consist largely of mission personnel and representatives from partner organizations.

With regard to USAID, we employ the term "operational concepts" to mean field-focused intellectual products—derived from any part of the agency, its partners or customers—that identify innovative methods and technologies to deliver development assistance. Such concepts, when shaped by a concerted process of development and refinement, will help identify future operational capabilities, so USAID can stay on top of its game in a rapidly changing global economy. They don't look at just new hardware (not that *that's* a bad idea . . .), but focus in large part on organizational "doctrine"—known in USAID as "best practices." Key elements of concept development include: opportunities and encouragement to innovate, acceptance of a high failure rate, liberal experimentation and testing of new ways of doing business, and—most importantly—rewarding and protecting those who take risks.

PPC would maintain its overall leadership responsibilities in terms of policy definition, monitoring, and reporting, and, as such, would clearly have the leading staff function for backstopping the OCP, as well as ensuring that its recommendations are implemented and monitored. However, it should be clear that the OCP and PPC are not identical in function.

The OCP would conduct its work via virtual meetings utilizing email, and would operate on an eight-week decision cycle designed to culminate in votes on 3 to 5 outstanding issues concerning USAID's new OPS system. The votes would subsequently be translated into majority rulings (with the potential for articulated dissenting opinions) for submission to the Administrator for action through that office or any lower office tasked by the Administrator. In this eight-week work cycle, the OCP would be supported by an eight-person Concept Development Group (CDG), made up from representatives of USAID/W's major bureaus.

Who would sit on the Operational Concepts Panel?

All OCP members would serve in a limited-time capacity, at the expense of their sponsoring institutions. When we employ the term “representative” below, it is our intent that these individuals act as conduits and spokespersons for the collective groups of personnel reflected by these categories. They should not, however, represent--in a bureaucratic sense--these groups’ narrow organizational interests. We propose the following membership:

Deputy Administrator serves as Chairperson and votes only in case of ties

The Staff Director of the Concepts Development Group (described below) serves as both Secretary to the OCP and Senior Advisor to the Administrator and DA on reforms

1. AFR Mission representative
2. ANE Mission representative
3. ENI Mission representative
4. LAC Mission representative
5. Bureau of Humanitarian Response representative
6. Foreign Service National representative
7. Partner Donor Organization representative
8. Partner Universities (Title 12) representative
9. Partner Universities (Private) representative
10. Non-Governmental Organizations representative
11. Private Voluntary Organizations representative
12. Non-Profit Contractors representative
13. For-Profit Contractors representative
14. AFR Bureau representative
15. ANE Bureau representative
16. ENI Bureau representative
17. LAC Bureau representative
18. Management Bureau representative
19. Policy and Program Coordination Bureau representative
20. Global Bureau representative

The relevant Assistant Administrators would select the representatives from their own bureaus (and, in some cases, directly from missions), and they would serve at the AA’s discretion. The Office of the DA would select partner organizations that would, in turn, select the representatives from their organizations who would serve two-year appointments.

We believe it’s important to spread membership evenly across the various regional bureaus (seats 1-4 and 14-17), splitting membership between mission and Washington-based personnel. We view BHR’s representative (seat 5) as inherently field-focused, so we don’t replicate the dual approach there. Representation for foreign service nationals (seat 6) only makes sense, since they often possess the deepest institutional memory regarding actual practices in the field at individual

missions. The group of seven partner organization representatives (seats 7-13) ensures that non-agency voices will be heard. Their numbers, in conjunction with the first six seats, means that a majority of the OCP will come armed with a strong field perspective. The remaining three seats (18-20) are extended to the Washington-based support bureaus (M, PPC, and Global) to ensure their views are included in the mix.

The CDG Staff Director

The CDG Staff Director would need to be a Foreign Service or Senior Executive Service career employee, ruling out a political appointee. This is because the individual selected would need to possess a significant USAID experience base, otherwise his or her credibility in this crucial role would be suspect among rank and file members, as well as partner organizations. This individual would be selected by the DA, in consultation with the Administrator, and would hold this post at their collective discretion.

Who would serve as staff members in the Concept Development Group?

To the extent possible, we would expect that PPC, as well as M/MPI, would provide much of the staff time required by the CDG. However, the CDG must be seen as an independent entity, answerable first and foremost to the Administrator and the OCP. It therefore needs the capacity to draw upon agency resources beyond those of M and PPC, to include outside contractor support. To that end, we would advocate that the CDG Staff Director have a small core staff of direct hires, as well as some limited funding for contract personnel.

The OCP's eight-week decision cycle

For the following decision cycle, the OCP would need to set up its own LISTSERV network. This network, known as OPSNET, would operate in the same informal, moderated manner as RFNET. Following that line of reasoning, we'd advocate having Africa Bureau turn over RFNET to OCP. The CDG staff would direct the operations of OPSNET.

The eight-week decision cycle would consist of the following phases:

Week 1

Based on CDG staff work, proposals received from agency personnel, and issues submitted by OCP members, the CDG Staff Director, in consultation with the Deputy Administrator, would select 3 to 5 actionable issues for announcement on OPSNET. This announcement would serve as an "open mike" for commentary by any USAID or partner organization personnel. Examples of possible issues would be:

- Who should or shouldn't be a member of a Core SO Team?
- What is the real distinction between Core and Expanded Team members?
- How much access to data should Expanded Team members have?
- What role should Expanded Team members play in SO and RP Team decision making?
- How should USAID address potential conflicts for team members in situations where empowerment and accountability become particularly confusing?

Week 3

The CDG would post all feedback received from the field, editing for brevity.

Week 4

The CDG would post a summary of the received debate, organized by issue.

Week 5

The CDG would post think pieces authored by individual CDG staff and OCP members that relate to the issue list currently in play.

Week 6

The CDG Staff Director, in consultation with the Deputy Administrator and the Administrator, would represent the original issue list with the individual items framed in terms of outlining two or more courses of action (COA). Each COA would specify which agency officials or category of officials would be responsible for implementing the proposed change in policy or procedure.

Week 7

OCP members submit their votes with one-page written opinion as supporting documentation. CDG Staff Director consults with DA and Administrator on outcome of votes across issues, and final decisions are made concerning delegation of subsequent implementation of proposed changes. CDG staff would also be encouraged to submit their own memos regarding the potential impact of these proposed changes on the overall reform process.

Week 8

CDG Staff Director's Summary Report is posted on OPSNET, outlining the votes by issue, summarizing the key points made in majority and dissenting opinions, and announcing the Administrator's decisions regarding implementation of proposed changes. Full text of all OCP member opinions are likewise posted. At the end of this decision cycle, all OPSNET correspondence would be archived at a dedicated OCP web site that is accessible via the Internet.

The next eight-week cycle would commence with the first Monday of the first full work week of the following month.

Key attributes of successful “concept development” entities that OCP/CDG should possess

The following list stems from our research into similar organizational attempts to foster concept development within a large bureaucracy:

- Located above the fray of bureaucratic politics and directly attached to organization’s top leader or his or her deputy
- Access to top leader/deputy is unfettered, very regular, and highly publicized among rank and file
- Not captured by policy, internal evaluation, or comptroller branches, despite their frequent attempts to do so
- Output to top leader/deputy is not vetted through bureaucracy for “chops” or amendments
- Made up of career personnel, and not political appointees
- Long-term focus; not caught up in day-to-day politics or organizational “fire drills”
- Authority to “subpoena” anyone within the organization for information
- Honest broker and protector of individuals with new ideas
- Focused on the future, emerging issues, and over-the-horizon threats/problems
- Focused on actionable change versus feel-good vision; start with procedures and tools and let the cultural change follow on its own accord
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Focused on changes that can be tested and measured

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Focused on concept gaps that fall through the cracks of bureaucracy; serve as guardians for concept “orphans” too cross-cutting for any one division to own

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Role of ombudsmen; eyes and ears of top leadership

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Typically have representatives travel with top leaders so as to know the issues closest to them; usually involved in advance work and shaping the road show

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Often serve as generators of talking points for top leaders on the current top reform/change issues

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Wide latitude in authority across bureaucracy; their interest in issues interpreted as tantamount to interest of top leadership; often sit in on key content senior management meetings

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Ability to create and empower short-term task forces, or “blitz teams,” on specific issues

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Strong links to training community, where most of proposed changes will find first implementation

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Monitor the changes they push down into the bureaucracy for implementation

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“Open mike” feedback function; conduit to top leadership about morale problems below

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Milestone task-master regarding actionable changes, but don’t engage in micro-management, as details left to tasked individuals within the bureaucracy

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Despite high-level, elite nature of work, great transparency in operations; they are an open book to the rank and file, typically utilizing intranets and extranets to great effect

- Issue annual reports and state-of-the-organization addresses that focus greatly on specific and concrete successes achieved
- Make-up is highly mixed, representing all the key culture groups of the organization
- Congressional experience or ties is greatly appreciated and sought after among members/staff
- Never enshrine anything as the last word; change is viewed as constant, inevitable, and desirable
- Staff always trolling for new ideas; representatives constantly on the go to conferences, workshops, etc., looking to identify the conceptual movers and shakers for recruitment into the concept development network
- Staff often serve as informal help desk on reinvention/reform/vision issues
- Staff work hard at fostering good relations with line divisions; seek to avoid having managers blind sided by new proposals

Example from the field of a potential OCP judging methodology

Several USAID missions have already proceeded to create ad hoc versions of the OCP decision-cycle process described above. The reengineering “truth tests” or “reality checks” already in use in the field could serve as operating methodologies for the OCP and CDG. One such example is presented in Annex II.

A final point

Headquarters-driven change is always far more revolutionary than field-driven change, which is necessarily far more evolutionary. HQ-based management visionaries can recast entire organizational structures and operating philosophies overnight, but that’s only *so much sound and fury signifying nothing* . . . until corresponding events occur in the field. Many in USAID

understand the need for a new reengineering “center of gravity” to sort out the many issues left dangling by the uneven implementation of the new OPS system and the largely dysfunctional New Management System. The key to establishing such an organizational entity, however, will not be how well this body unites the various internal factions and bureaucratic perspectives across the USAID/W scene, but in how it serves as a free-flow conduit between Washington and the field. *To be more blunt, an OCP-like entity that is trapped entirely within either M or PPC, or even shared between them, will not be effective, and most likely a waste of time and resources.*

Endnotes

¹ Thomas P.M. Barnett, *Nine Issues Concerning USAID's New OPS System: How Recent Institutional Experiences within the U.S. Military Might Point to Some Useful Solutions* (Alexandria VA: The CNA Corporation), January 1997.

² The essays were published under the title, “Key Issues and Approaches for the USAID Operations (OPS) System,” in a three-part series across issues nos. 3 to 5 (June, August, and September), volume 3, 1997.

³ The five entities we examined were: the U.S. Naval Doctrine Command, Department of Navy (Norfolk VA); the Chief of Naval Operations' Executive Panel (CEP), Department of Navy (Alexandria VA); the Commander-in-Chief's (CINC) Command Action Group (CAG), U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), Department of Defense (Honolulu HI); the Business Practices Team of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Department of Agriculture (Washington DC); and the Regulatory Reinvention Team, Environmental Protection Agency (Washington DC).

Annex I

Are we there yet? The never-ending story known as reengineering

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Observation

Institutionalizing a revolution as profound as USAID's new OPS system is like owning a house--your list of "things to do" never quite gets down to zero. Reengineering a bureaucracy as large and as mature as USAID is not something you can complete with a task force, or even many task forces issuing reports upon reports. Nor is it finished by a cascade of training experiences, a parade of consultants, or even the publication of the snazziest of electronic handbooks. Reengineering is made real only by doing that thing you do—over and over again as you progressively take on board new aspects of the reengineered system and test them against the same harsh realities that sent you to the drawing board in the first place. All the reengineering work done up to now within USAID is the equivalent of "bringing the horse to water." Reengineering as a process created by "them" is never going to get this horse to drink. Only the rank-and-file personnel in the field can finish off process.

So the questions, "Are we there yet?" "Aren't we finished with all this reengineering stuff?" and so on essentially miss the point. As does any rush to define "best practices." You can't give out advice on parenting until you've had the chance to raise a couple of children (and probably get one into college). Likewise, you can't start definitively citing the do's and don'ts of Results Frameworks until you've managed to get a few to maturity, and USAID won't reach that point until a year or so into the next century.

But if missions need guidelines to sort through what's needed and what's not in this new OPS system, shouldn't USAID/W be doing everything it can to identify best practices and spread that word? There's more harm than good to be found in any rushed effort. The new OPS system was purposely designed to move USAID away from a mode of thought that said "the more control the better." Too much control gets you central planning. It gets you supply-led planning. It gets you solutions looking for problems. It gets you 100 Toyotas on the dock and people trying to figure out what should be done with them.

Instead, the new OPS system is designed to force the agency to embrace more uncertainty in its planning, to act more like a business trying to capitalize on marketing opportunities as they arise in host countries, to listen more closely to its local customers. It would be nice if someone could come up with hard and fast rules on how to do this right from the start, but doesn't that sound a bit counter-intuitive given the goals? Sort of like some business guru's book telling you

to “always plan for the unexpected!” (“But if I could plan for it, it wouldn’t be unexpected!”).

Another type of danger lurks in the too-fast gleanings of experience from the field. Remember, the new OPS system forces a huge change in operating perspective from supply-led to demand-led thinking, and with any perspective change that profound, early implementation is likely to yield more bad examples than good. That’s just human nature. For example, a recent informal polling of Chiefs of Party (COP) of a large USAID contracting firm indicated that only a handful of these five dozen COPs were actually invited to join SO Teams—this despite core values of partnership and empowerment and a proposed Results Framework methodology that stresses accounting for the activities and contributions of USAID collaborators. And yet, if one wasn’t careful, would not this seemingly closed-door definition of an SO Team soon be enshrined as an agency best practice?

Analogous discussion

When the U.S. Navy finally decided to reengineer itself following the end of the Cold War, its rank-and-file membership was nonetheless deeply divided over how thorough such an effort should ever hope to be. Many were convinced that all this talk about a “new Navy” was simply a knee-jerk reaction to the general public clamoring for a “peace dividend,” and therefore something that would blow over with time. Others said it was just due to pressure from Congress and the drive to reduce the deficit; so, while the Navy might suffer in the 1990s, there was always a good chance it would rebound, funding-wise, once this deficit-mania was satisfied (especially since the Defense Department budget always seemed to rise and fall in cycles during the Cold War era). Fortunately, however, there was a strong core group within the Navy who acknowledged that a Rubicon had been crossed with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and that the U.S. Navy would either quickly adapt to whatever the new reality was or risk withering on the vine.

But even within this core group of believers, there were many who didn’t understand how long such a profound transformation in thinking would take. Hastily, a group of the Navy and Marine Corps’ “best and brightest” were assembled and locked into a large conference room for many weeks (along with a couple of civilian advisers, including the author). Their orders? Don’t come out until you have a new naval post-Cold War vision. About five months later this group did emerge with that vision, which subsequently found expression as arguably the most seminal Department of Navy White Paper issued since World War II. And at that point, many in this core group of believers thought they had this battle licked. “After all,” they noted, “haven’t we just declared our new operating philosophy for all the world to see?”

That was the spring of 1992. However, the institutional make-over started by that White Paper, . . . *From the Sea*, is anything but over. In many ways, all . . . *From the Sea* did was to restart a long-running argument within the Department of the Navy simply by posing an alternative to the mode of doctrinal thinking that had been predominant since WWII, i.e., proposing a littoral operational focus versus the old standby known as “sea control.” Although the new gospel of the

littoral focus is officially stamped onto the brain of every sailor and Marine serving today, make no mistake about it, the new vision has yet to win each and every heart. Some of this internal conflict is clearly generational and will dispel with time, but most of it stems from the honest efforts of the Department of the Navy to solidify a new and untested base of operational knowledge concerning the littoral strategy—and that simply takes time and training.

Are there still instances when the Navy and Marine Corps lose their grip on that new strategy and resort reflexively to old favorite arguments in their never-ending pleas to Congress for funding? Definitely. But the keys here are: (1) a continuing leadership cadre that is committed to following through on this new vision; (2) sufficient autonomy for commanders in the field to test out this new vision year-in and year-out; and (3) the slow and steady construction of naval doctrine over time by an institution created solely as a result of this new vision—the Naval Doctrine Command, which was meant to gather the experience, not create something out of whole cloth.

Although it may seem unbelievable, the U.S. Navy never had an institution dedicated to the review and generation of naval doctrine prior to this recent reengineering effort. But the naval leadership well understood the risks of not empowering an institution to watch over the implementation process from a detached and objective perch. Nor was this organization in any hurry to grind out its version of best practices. The first “capstone” document did not appear until a full two years after the White Paper was written. As this document’s foreword proclaimed, it incorporated “the lessons of history, learned in both the flush of success and the bitterness of failure.”¹ In other words, the only way naval forces could plan for their future was to understand how their experience shapes that future. The effort to reengineer naval forces for the new era could not be sprung out of a bottle like some magic potion, it had to be an ongoing learning process conducted by a learning organization.

Recommendation

USAID must avoid the temptation to declare, prematurely, victories or failures in what is necessarily an ongoing and long-term effort to institutionalize the products and plans of its recent reengineering effort. It must dramatically slow down the rush to discover best practices, and avoid enshrining any anecdotal evidence from the field too early. What a Country Experimentation Lab does is not necessarily a best practice (emphasizing the word *experimentation*). What the majority of missions do is not necessarily a best practice (e.g., it may be unique to the situation and an example of empowerment rather than a technique of universal applicability). That which makes an RF succeed over the course of its implementation is possibly a best practice, if the experience is widespread and repeatable, but that knowledge will take years to confirm. Mistakes are far easier to discover in the short run than best practices, and, often, discovering them has far more positive long-term impact. Remember, the phrase “trial and error” assumes failure as a front-loaded input to experience.

USAID should establish an organization dedicated to the long-term collection and analysis of

doctrine-generating experiences from the field. This body cannot be Washington-centered or staffed. Its center of gravity must lie with the missions. The generation of doctrine is inherently a bottom-up process. If the organization created smacks more of a Politburo than a House of Representatives, genuine doctrine will not be generated—only directives from on high. Another way to think of this proposed organization is that it must be significantly detached from USAID’s executive branch, or the Management Bureau. If the Operations Business Area Analysis effort can be thought of as the “new USAID’s” Constitutional Congress, this doctrine-judging body must be something closer to a Supreme Court, or something that picks its judgments from among the best arguments that wind their way up from the local courts (read missions) around the “land.” If this body enjoys no “separation of power” from the Management Bureau, it will likely be limited to rule-making as opposed to experience-judging.

USAID must create some sort of explicit mandate for the building of knowledge within each mission. With 2- to 3-year tours for most personnel and little overlap or emphasis on what has gone on over the past 20 to 30 years, the institutional memory within missions lies primarily with Foreign Service Nationals, or in USAID/W offices with responsibility for tracking change over time. Although these latter two sources of information can generate a certain amount of lessons learned, the lack of incentives for in-mission personnel creates a sort of memory “black hole” that others can work around but never bridge. There are a variety of fairly simple methods to generate this crucial data flow (e.g., entry and exit interviews, after-action reports for key events), but more important is some agency-wide mandate confirming the utility of such data collection. Every investment in the future is a drain on today’s resources, but without them no payoffs accrue. A strong, field-based institutional memory within USAID is a key component to generating best practices over time.

Endnote

¹ Foreword to *Naval Warfare: Naval Doctrine Publication 1* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), p. i.

Annex II

USAID/Bolivia's "Truth Test": Potential Model for Reality Testing

A while back, USAID/Bolivia developed a "Reengineering Truth Test Proposal" that they've been testing in their mission. In doing so, USAID/Bolivia identified something they saw as a problem relative to all of the Automated Directives Systems: some of its guidance is out of synch with the original intent of the ADS processes, as well as the Agency's core values, particularly Teamwork and Participation, Management for Results, and Empowerment and Accountability. From the perspective of mission staff, this has led the agency back to *regulation creep*, which is anathema to the concept of reinvention/reengineering.

As a result, USAID/Bolivia proposes the application of a "truth test" to any new guidance coming out of Washington. The test includes key questions organized under each of the Agency's five core values. The Truth Test questions focus discussion on how any piece of new guidance supports the Agency's core values.

The categories and related questions are:

Results Management vs. Input Control

1. Does the guidance strengthen the SOT's ability to manage for results?
2. Does the guidance minimize non-value-added steps and paperwork for SOTs?
3. Does the guidance fit with the Results Framework management concept and methodology in ADS 200?
4. Does the guidance minimize special SOT reporting requirements?
5. Does the guidance provide the SOT, customers, partners and stakeholders (as applicable) with simple, clear rules and guidelines?

Empowerment & Accountability vs. Centralization & Diffusion of Responsibilities

1. Does the guidance delegate as much decision making authority to SOTs as is consistent with good accountability practices, existing delegations, and assigned responsibilities?

2. Does the guidance facilitate SOT control over budget allocation and funding decisions?
3. Does the guidance increase SOTs' accountability over agency resources?
4. Does the guidance allow for FSN empowerment and full participation in the process?

Customer Focus vs. Bureaucratic Convenience

1. Does the guidance mitigate red tape for partners and customers while maintaining agency and statutory requirements?
2. Does implementation of the guidance allow for inclusion of views of affected customer and stakeholders in decision-making?
3. Does the process for review of guidance include adequate steps to obtain and incorporate views of both internal and external customers who will be affected?
4. Can customers easily find the guidance as part of the Automated Directives System, and does it follow a format consistent with other ADS sections?

Teamwork and Participation vs. Compartmentalization and Hierarchy

1. Does the guidance promote core and expanded teamwork?
2. Does the guidance avoid appropriation by higher levels of what should be SOT-level decision making?
3. Does the guidance promote transparency and participation in decision making processes?

Diversity vs. Elitism

1. Does the guidance promote broad inclusion of views in new decision making processes?

The Truth Test involves applying a scoring system to each new piece of guidance. The scoring scale is from 1 to 5 in response to each of the above questions. For example, a score of "5" means that the guidance is "Excellent in promoting reengineering core values," while a score of "1" means "Unsatisfactory--we are going backwards." After obtaining a score for each question, it is possible to then produce an overall average score on a given piece of guidance.

In its initial RFNET message on this methodology, USAID/Bolivia included an example of

one piece of guidance they tested. The guidance reviewed was “Competitive Guidelines for Grants and Cooperative Agreements.” The document scored only a “2” overall and was therefore determined to be “Poor, detrimental in some way in promoting core values.” In the end, though, the reviewers concluded that competition was an objective they shared with Washington, and that some of the suggestions in the guidance for achieving it were acceptable. However, the mission personnel were steadfast in their conviction that Washington was in no position to dictate to them how such competition must be achieved, especially when its official, written guidance displayed an appalling lack of consistency with the just-declared agency core values, or the more specific principles of results-oriented reengineering.